(c) and (d) The Review Committee submitted its Report to the Government in April, 2007. The Committee has, inter-alia, recommended that the National Council for Teacher *Education Act, 1993 be repealed.*

Entry of foreign law firms

1376. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has allowed the entry of foreign law firms into the Indian legal services sector, to practise foreign law;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is in response to India's Commitment to liberalise service sector, as promised under WTO;

(d) if so, to what extent Government is ready to bring liberalization and allow foreign firms to practise in India into legal profession; and

(e) whether Indian legal community has raised any objection in this regard, and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) No, Sir;

(b) Does not arise;

(c) No, Sir;

(d) Does not arise;

(e) Yes, Sir. The Government has invited the views of all stakeholders in the matter, including objections, if any.

Setting up of high courts benches

†1377. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of high court benches functioning in the States, at present;

(b) the norms followed to set up a bench or a special bench;

(c) the States where movement for setting up of such benches is going on;

(d) whether Government has received any report of such movement from Orissa;

(e) whether the State Chief Minister has submitted any letter to the Central Government in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details of steps being taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) There are 14 Permanent Benches functioning at present in the jurisdiction of 6 High Courts.

(b) The Jaswant Singh Commission in this report suggested the broad principles and criteria to be followed while deciding the question of expediency and desirability of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

establishment of a Bench of a High Court away from the principal seat and the factors to be kept in view in selecting the venue of the said Bench. The report of the Commission was placed in the Parliament Library on 15.10.86 and was laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha on 20.4.87 and 21.4.87 respectively, which may be referred to.

(c) Representations have been received from time to time from various bar Associations, other organizations, Members of Parliament and other individuals for establishment of Benches of High Courts away from their principal seats in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Orissa.

The Government has approved the proposal for the setting up of a Circuit Bench of the Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. The confirmation as to whether all the infrastructural facilities for establishment and smooth functioning of the proposed Jalpaiguri Bench have been provided by the Government of West Bengal is awaited from the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court.

(d) to (f) In 1991, the State Government of orissa intimated that they has decided in principle, to set up Circuit Benches of the Orissa High Court at Berhampur and Sambalpur or Bolangir but the High Court of Orissa had not considered it expedient to do so. The State Government were advised to consider, if it so wished, to re-emphasize upon the High Court the desirability of establishing its Circuit Benches and to persuade the High Court to do so under Clause 10 of the Orissa High Court Order, 1948. However, no further reference has been received thereafter in this regard from the State Government or the High Court.

The question of opening a High Court Bench is considered by the Central Government only when a complete proposal is received from the State Government in consultation with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court.

Status of draft delimitation report

1378. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the draft delimitation report submitted by the Delimitation Commission recently;

(b) whether Government has finalized the diverse proposals in this regard;

(c) if not, the reasons for delaying the announcements; and

(d) the steps proposed to expedite the implementation of the delimitation proposals recommended by the Delimitation Commission?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) The Delimitation Commission has so far issued Orders in respect of 25 States/Union Territories, namely, Kerala, Tripura, Mizoram, Goa, Pondicherry, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra, Sikkim, National Capital Territory of Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Jharkhand. Further the High Court of Guwahati has passed its two different interim orders to suspend the delimitation work in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. The High Court of Guwahati in another interim order directed the delimitation Commission not to publish the final order in respect of Nagaland. In respect of the State of Manipur the work of delimitation has been resumed after the stay given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court on the order dated 19-01-2007 of the Guwahati High Court.